Akathist to Righteous Abel, The First Martyr of Humanity

Feastday December 11

Kontakion 1

To you, O holy and righteous Abel, the first who pleased God by faith and was crowned with martyrdom, we sinners offer hymns of praise. As you stand before the Throne of the Almighty, bearing the unfading crown of victory, intercede for us who call unto you with love:
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Ikos 1

In the beginning of the world, when the earth was yet young and the breath of Paradise still lingered upon mankind, you, O righteous Abel, were born as a sign of hope amid the sorrow of fallen Adam. You chose the better part, tending the flock with a pure heart and offering to God the firstlings in spirit and truth. Therefore, with joy we cry to you:
Rejoice, child of fallen Adam who rose above the curse!
Rejoice, gentle shepherd of the ancient flock!
Rejoice, you who from childhood loved the Lord with all your heart!
Rejoice, first offerer of a sacrifice well-pleasing unto God!
Rejoice, bright image of meekness and obedience!
Rejoice, teacher of all who seek to worship in spirit!
Rejoice, for your blood spoke more powerfully than the silence of Cain!
Rejoice, for your righteousness shines through all ages!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 2

Seeing the earth stained with human sin, yet beholding your pure offering ascending as fragrant incense before the Lord, the angels in heaven cried aloud: Alleluia!

Ikos 2

Your sacrifice, O holy Abel, was not of earth alone, but of a heart wholly given to God. While Cain brought the fruit of the ground with a divided soul, you brought the firstlings of your flock and their fat, offering them with faith and love. Therefore, marveling at the purity of your oblation, we cry:

Rejoice, you who taught the world true worship!
Rejoice, first priest of the Most High in spirit!
Rejoice, for your gift was sealed with divine fire!
Rejoice, for the Lord looked upon you with favor!
Rejoice, model of evangelical perfection before the Law!
Rejoice, forerunner of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 3

The flame of jealousy consumed the heart of Cain, but the flame of divine love burned brightly in you, O righteous one. Even when hatred drew near, you remained a lamb without blemish, and offered yourself in silence to the will of God, singing in your heart: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

When your brother rose up against you in the field, you did not resist evil with evil, but entrusted your soul into the hands of the Just Judge. Thus you became the first martyr, the first to pass through death into life eternal, the first among Old Testament righteous to enter Paradise. Therefore we cry to you:

Rejoice, lamb led to the slaughter without opening your mouth!
Rejoice, first to tread the path of suffering for righteousness' sake!

Rejoice, you who conquered evil by meekness!
Rejoice, you who overcame hatred by love!
Rejoice, prototype of the martyrs of all ages!
Rejoice, forerunner of Christ the Chief Shepherd!
Rejoice, for your blood cried out to heaven for mercy!
Rejoice, for your death became the seed of eternal life!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 4

The voice of your blood cried out from the ground, O righteous Abel, and the Lord heard and was moved. From that very hour, the earth itself bears witness against murder, and every innocent sufferer finds in you a protector and intercessor, while we sing to God who avenged you: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

O most wondrous martyr, you were slain before the Law was given, before prophets arose, before the coming of Christ, yet by faith you beheld the day of salvation. Therefore the Church honors you together with all the saints, and calls upon you with these praises:
Rejoice, first name written in the book of life!
Rejoice, first citizen in spirit of the heavenly Paradise!
Rejoice, companion of Enoch and Noah in glory!
Rejoice, elder brother of Abraham in faith!
Rejoice, for the Lord Himself called you “righteous”!
Rejoice, for Christ numbered you among His own!
Rejoice, bright star of the Old Covenant!
Rejoice, unfading crown of the New!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 5

You stand now before the Throne of God, O Abel, clothed in white robes washed in the blood of your own testimony, holding the palm of victory, and beholding face to face Him whom you loved without seeing. Pray for us, that we also may be found worthy to sing with you the eternal: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

All the righteous of the Old Testament looked toward the promise, but you, O Abel, were the first among them before Christ came to enter into its fulfillment. You are the beginning of the cloud of witnesses that surrounds us, urging us to run with patience the race that is set before us. Therefore we cry:

Rejoice, first witness to the power of innocent suffering!
Rejoice, first confessor of the truth that the meek shall inherit the earth!
Rejoice, you who pray for your murderer even now!
Rejoice, you who teach us to forgive unto seventy times seven!
Rejoice, intercessor for those persecuted for righteousness!
Rejoice, protector of the innocent and the weak!
Rejoice, consolation of those who weep without cause!
Rejoice, swift helper of those slain by envy and hatred!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 6

The whole creation groans, awaiting the revelation of the sons of God, yet from the beginning you were revealed as a son of grace. By your blood the earth was sanctified, and by your righteousness the way of salvation was shown.

Wherefore, with all the faithful we sing to God who accepted you: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

In every generation, when brother rises against brother, when envy and pride shed innocent blood, your meek image shines forth, O Abel, calling the world to repentance. Therefore, falling down before you, we humbly cry:
Rejoice, mirror of patience amid injustice!
Rejoice, light that shines in the darkness of fratricide!
Rejoice, for you put to shame the spirit of Cain that still walks the earth!
Rejoice, for you strengthen the spirit of Abel in every humble heart!
Rejoice, healer of broken families and divided brethren!
Rejoice, reconciler of those estranged by anger!
Rejoice, guardian of the bond of brotherhood!
Rejoice, terror of those who plot evil in secret!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 7

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world was prefigured in you, O righteous Abel. For as you were slain by your brother, so He was delivered up by His own. As your blood cried out for justice, His speaks better things than yours, crying mercy. Wherefore, uniting our voices with yours in paradise, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

A new and living way has been opened by the Blood of Christ, yet you, O Abel, walked the ancient path of faith that led to the same gate. Therefore the Church, both militant and triumphant, honors you as the first to enter

therein, and cries:
Rejoice, you who met Christ in the bosom of Abraham!
Rejoice, you who rejoiced when the captives were led forth from Hades!
Rejoice, first of the Old Testament saints to behold the Risen Lord!
Rejoice, partaker of the Paschal joy before the Passover!
Rejoice, you who now stand among the myrrh-bearing women and the apostles!
Rejoice, you who worship with the seraphim before the Lamb!
Rejoice, for your name is ever upon the lips of the Theotokos!
Rejoice, for the angels call you brother!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 8

O holy and righteous Abel, accept this hymn of praise from unworthy lips, and do not disdain the tears of those who remember your innocent suffering. As you once offered the firstlings of your flock to God, now offer our prayers before the throne of the Most High, that we may be delivered from envy, hatred, and murder, and be counted worthy to sing with you forever: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

Come, all you faithful, let us crown with hymns the uncorrupted crown of mankind, the righteous Abel, who though slain so long ago yet speaks to us still. Let us kiss the earth where his blood cried out, and cry to him:
Rejoice, foundation stone of the Church built upon the blood of the righteous!
Rejoice, first page of the martyrology of God!

Rejoice, you whose memory is celebrated before Abraham was!
Rejoice, you whom the Lord Himself called “righteous”!
Rejoice, for your name is sweet in the mouth of the Church!
Rejoice, for your prayer is mighty before the Throne!
Rejoice, first to prove that the violent shall not finally prevail!
Rejoice, eternal youth who grows not old in paradise!
Rejoice, O Abel, first righteous one and ever-living intercessor!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 9

Every angel in heaven rejoices over you, O Abel, and every demon trembles, for your blood became the first defeat of the murderer from the beginning. With angels and saints we too rejoice and sing the victory song: Alleluia!

Ikos 9

Orators and philosophers are silenced before the eloquence of your silent blood. The wisdom of this world is shamed by your childlike faith. Therefore we, who have nothing but words, cast them at your feet, saying:
Rejoice, you who conquered without sword or spear!
Rejoice, you who triumphed by being overcome!
Rejoice, teacher of the folly that is wiser than men!
Rejoice, revealer of the weakness that is stronger than strength!
Rejoice, for in your death life was born again!
Rejoice, for in your fall paradise rose!
Rejoice, first to walk the royal road of the Cross!
Rejoice, first to wear the scarlet robe of martyrdom!

Rejoice, O Abel, first righteous one and ever-living intercessor!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 10

Wishing to save the world, the Lord who accepted your sacrifice accepted also the Sacrifice of Himself. Now you behold face to face the Lamb you foreshadowed, and with Him you offer the unbloody sacrifice of praise, singing forever: Alleluia!

Ikos 10

Stand with us, O Abel, at the dread judgment seat, when the books are opened and every hidden thing is revealed. Place your hand, still red with the marks of love, upon our trembling hearts, that we may find mercy, while we cry:
Rejoice, advocate of sinners before the righteous Judge!
Rejoice, for your prayer turns away wrath!
Rejoice, you who will embrace even Cain at the last day!
Rejoice, you who prepare thrones for the repentant!
Rejoice, first to enter, last to forget those left behind!
Rejoice, for your love is wider than the curse!
Rejoice, for your righteousness covers a multitude of transgressions!
Rejoice, first-begotten of the dead in hope!
Rejoice, O Abel, first righteous one and ever-living intercessor!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 11

To the Lamb who was slain belong all victory and glory, yet He has been pleased to share His crown with you, O Abel,

His faithful servant. Wherefore we also crown you with these poor hymns, singing with you the eternal: Alleluia!

Ikos 11

O holy and righteous Abel, look upon us who still wander east of Eden, bearing the mark of Cain in our hearts. As you once offered spotless lambs, offer now our spotted souls, cleansed in the Blood that speaks better things than yours, while we cry:
Rejoice, reconciler of earth to heaven!
Rejoice, bridge built of innocent blood!
Rejoice, first to pass over and first to call us after!
Rejoice, you who wait for the last sinner with patience!
Rejoice, for the day draws near when death shall be no more!
Rejoice, for on that day you will embrace your brother!
Rejoice, first and last of the old creation made new!
Rejoice, child created by the Ancient of Days!
Rejoice, O Abel, first righteous one and ever-living intercessor!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 12

Grace has triumphed, love has conquered, innocence has overcome guilt. The blood of Abel is swallowed up in the Blood of Christ, and death itself is slain. With all the redeemed we sing the final hymn of victory: Alleluia!

Ikos 12

Accept, O most merciful Abel, this akathist offered by unworthy lips. As you never returned evil for evil on earth, return now blessing for our feeble praise, and bring us with you into the marriage supper of the Lamb, where with you we shall cry:

Rejoice, companion of the martyrs!
Rejoice, fellow-heir with the prophets!
Rejoice, brother of the apostles!
Rejoice, friend of the confessors!
Rejoice, kinsman of every soul made perfect!
Rejoice, for your joy is now full!
Rejoice, for your prayer is never-ending!
Rejoice, first and everlasting witness to the power of righteousness!
Rejoice, O Abel, first righteous one and ever-living intercessor!
Rejoice, O Abel, first-fruit of righteousness and martyr most innocent!

Kontakion 13 **(thrice)**
O holy and righteous Abel, first martyr and first-crowned of the human race, who standest even now before the Throne of God and of the Lamb: accept this hymn of thy children, make ceaseless intercession for us who bear the weight of Cain's sin, and when the Lord comes in glory bring us with thee into the joy of thy Lord, that we may sing with thee and with all the saints the everlasting: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

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your heart!
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First Prayer to the Righteous Abel

O holy and righteous Abel, first martyr and pleasing servant of God, who from the dawn of the world showed forth the beauty of a soul devoted to the Creator: accept this small offering of our love and praise. You who were slain without cause, yet conquered by meekness; you whose blood still cries out for mercy upon the earth, intercede for us sinners who are so often overcome by anger, envy, and pride.Teach us, O gentle shepherd, to offer to God not only the firstfruits of our labor, but the first love of our hearts. Strengthen us to bear injustice in silence, to forgive those who wrong us, and to love even those who hate us.Pray for our families, that no root of bitterness may spring up among brethren. Pray for the innocent who suffer throughout the world. Pray for those

tempted to violence, that the spirit of Cain may be cast out, and the spirit of Abel may prevail.And when our last hour comes, O first-confessor of the faith, stand beside us and lead us by the hand to the throne of the Lamb who was slain, that with you and all the saints we may glorify the Holy Trinity, the Father who accepted you, the Son who redeemed you, and the Holy Spirit who sanctified you, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Second Prayer to the Righteous Abel

O righteous Abel, first martyr of the old covenant and first soul received into light, who from the beginning beheld the mystery of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world: look upon us who still wander in the land of Nod, bearing in our hearts the murderous thoughts of Cain. By thy innocent blood, which cried out for vengeance yet was transformed into intercession by the Blood of Christ, pray that the spirit of envy may be driven far from us, that we may offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God, and that when our own hour comes we may meet death with the same meekness that opened paradise to thee. Stand with us at the judgment, O eldest brother of the redeemed, and present us spotless before the Face that smiled upon thee in the day of thy slaughter. For thine is the privilege to pray without ceasing for the race of Adam until the last tear is wiped away, and ours is the joy to call thee blessed through the ages of ages. Amen.